THE MADRAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Tuesday, the 23rd March 1948.

The House met in the Council Chamber, Fort St. George, at half past two of the clock, Mr. President (THE HON. SRI R. B. RAMAKRISHNA RAJU) in the Chair.

I.—QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

STARRED QUESTIONS.

Attendance of Hon. Ministers as Members of the Constituent Assembly.

* 48 Q.—SRI R. SURYANARAYANA RAO: Will the Hon. the Premier be pleased to state—

(*a*) the period or periods during which members of the Constituent Assembly who belong to the Council of Ministers have been away from Madras in connexion with the work of the Constituent Assembly and Committees of that Assembly;

(*b*) whether this Government was consulted regarding the membership of more than one Legislature before the Adaptation Order was passed removing the ban;

(*c*) whether the Government have at any time considered the incongruity of members of Council of Ministers being members of the Indian Legislature;

(*d*) whether, when members of the Council of Ministers move to Delhi to attend the sessions of the Constituent Assembly, they take with them a portion of the Secretariat;

(*e*) whether the members of the Council of Ministers and their staff draw any allowances during their stay in Delhi and, if so, what they are and the source from which these allowances are drawn;

(*f*) the extra cost incurred by Provincial Government on account of this frequent exodus to Delhi; and

(*g*) whether the question of the members of the Council of Ministers resigning their seats in the Constituent Assembly has ever been considered?

THE HON. DR. T. S. S. RAJAN (on behalf of Hon. the Premier) :—(*a*) & (*d*) The information is given in the appended statement [a].

" (*b*), (*c*) & (*g*) No.

" (*e*) All the expenditure incurred by the Hon. Ministers are met by the Central Government. The staff draw travelling allowance and daily allowance. This expenditure is met by the Provincial Government.

" (*f*) Rs. 10,210 from April 1947 to November 1947."

[a] Printed as Appendix I on pages 99–100 infra.

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SRI R. SURYANARAYANA RAO :—" May I know whether any directive has been issued to members of the Provincial Legislature who are also members of the Constituent Assembly that they should not attend the Constituent Assembly when the Provincial Legislature is in session? "

THE HON. DR. T. S. S. RAJAN :—" This Government do not think that it is necessary to issue such a directive."

SRI R. SURYANARAYANA RAO :—" Has any other body issued such a directive? "

THE HON. DR. T. S. S. RAJAN :—" So far as this Government are aware, we have not received any such directive nor have we issued any."

SRI B. BHIMA RAO :—" May I know whether the Constituent Assembly has issued any instruction to the effect that Ministers should resign their membership of that Assembly? "

THE HON. DR. T. S. S. RAJAN :—" This Government have not received any communication from the Constituent Assembly to that effect."

DR. V. K. JOHN :—" May I take it that the Hon. Ministers make a valuable contribution to the discussion in that Assembly? "

THE HON. DR. T. S. S. RAJAN :—" I suppose they do."

MR. PRESIDENT :—" Perhaps that is the reason why they do not want to resign."

SRI R. SURYANARAYANA RAO :—" May I know whether the members of the Council of Ministers are attending the sessions of that Assembly? "

THE HON. DR. T. S. S. RAJAN :—" No, Sir, not that I know of."

SRI R. SURYANARAYANA RAO :—" If it is so, since the members of the Council of Ministers were elected to the Constituent Assembly before they became Ministers, is not this Province being deprived of its representation in the Constituent Assembly to that extent? "

THE HON. DR. T. S. S. RAJAN :—" If the Ministers feel that their work as Ministers will permit their attending the sessions of the Constituent Assembly, they will attend. Otherwise, they will not attend. There is no ban on their attending."

SRI R. SURYANARAYANA RAO :—" Hon. Ministers who are members of the Constituent Assembly will not be attending that Assembly when the Provincial Legislature is in session. Is not this fact enough to show that to that extent, the absence of the Ministers deprive this Province of its representation in the Constituent Assembly? "

THE HON. DR. T. S. S. RAJAN :—" The Dominion Legislature is in session now and not the Constituent Assembly.

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Even for attending the Constituent Assembly, it depends upon the exigencies of the situation. As I said, there is no definite ban on their attendance."

MR. PRESIDENT :—"The hon. Member seems to suggest that if the Ministers resign, some others may take their place."

DR. V. K. JOHN :—"Considering all aspects of the question, is it not advisable for the Ministers now at least to resign from the Constituent Assembly?"

THE HON. DR. T. S. S. RAJAN :—"I don't think the Government will consider the question either now or in the near future."

SRI R. SURYANARAYANA RAO :—"Are not this Government anxious that this Province should be represented on the Constituent Assembly in adequate numbers?"

THE HON. DR. T. S. S. RAJAN :—"I can assure the hon. Member that the claims of this Province are well represented and the interests well protected by members who are already there."

SRI R. SURYANARAYANA RAO :—"If the Hon. Minister concedes that this Province should be adequately represented, will those who cannot attend the session of the Constituent Assembly resign and make room for those who can find time to devote to the work?"

THE HON. DR. T. S. S. RAJAN :—"I have already stated that the claims and interests of this Province are well represented and protected."

SRI A. GOVINDACHARYULU :—"May I know whether the ordinary members of the Constituent Assembly are allowed to take a clerk and a peon with them as is the case with the Ministers?

THE HON. DR. T. S. S. RAJAN :—"I am not in a position to say what the ordinary members are allowed or are not allowed."

Administration of the Pudukottah State.

*49 Q.—DR. SIR A. LAKSHMANASWAMI MUDALIYAR :—Will the Hon. the Premier be pleased to state—

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government have taken over the administration of the Pudukottah State;

(b) if so, whether they were consulted by the Government of India before this step was taken; and

(c) whether they had opportunities of considering all aspects of the question and the responsibilities of the Provincial Government in taking over the State?

THE HON. DR. T. S. S. RAJAN (on behalf of Hon. the Premier) :—"(a) The answer is in the affirmative.